

KENTUCKY BOARD OF EDUCATION

BOARD NOTES

Volume 12, No. 2 Report of the April 7-8, 2004, Regular Meeting

STATE BOARD APPROVES CHANGES IN CLASSIFYING DROPOUTS

At its April meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education approved changes in the classification of dropouts in order to totally align with the National Council of Education Statistics' definition of a dropout, a nationally accepted model. Currently, any student who withdraws from school, enrolls in an adult GED program and subsequently receives a GED diploma is considered a dropout. The new policy passed by the Board would not count a student as a dropout if the student drops out of school and obtains a GED by October 1 of the following school year. Additionally, the Board approved the creation of a state-approved secondary GED program. The Kentucky Department of Education was directed to develop minimum standards, requirements and guidelines for a secondary GED program and bring these back to the Board in June for review.

The new policies will make Kentucky totally consistent with the NCES dropout definition allowing for comparable national comparisons. Also, a positive alternative will be created for students previously classified as dropouts.

The policies cited above were incorporated into the final approval of 702 KAR 7:125, Pupil Attendance, which also occurred at the April meeting. This regulation will go through a public hearing on May 28 and proceed through the legislative committee review process before becoming final.

If you have questions on the dropout definition changes and/or the pupil attendance regulation, contact Yvette Perry at (502) 564-3846 (email: yperry@kde.state.ky.us) or Kyna Koch at (502) 564-3930 (email: kkoch@kde.state.ky.us).

NEW AWARD NAMED FOR DR. SAMUEL ROBINSON

To honor retiring state board member Samuel Robinson, the Kentucky Board of Education established the Dr. Samuel Robinson Award. The award is to be conferred annually on an individual or organization in Kentucky for demonstrating outstanding commitment, service and leadership in promoting opportunities to learn at high levels for all Kentucky students.

Chair Helen Mountjoy emphasized: “These traits – commitment, service and leadership – are the hallmarks of Dr. Robinson’s remarkable career as an advocate for all children.”

Three of Dr. Robinson’s former colleagues on the Board – Joe Kelly of Georgetown, Deborah Morrow of Madisonville and Jane Adams Venters of Somerset – will serve as a selection committee for the first recipient, to be named at the June Kentucky Board of Education meeting.

For more information on this award, contact Mary Ann Miller at (502) 564-3141 (email: mmiller@kde.state.ky.us).

DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL WRITING PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT MODIFICATIONS

At a joint meeting of the Kentucky Board of Education’s Assessment and Accountability and Curriculum Committees, discussion occurred about possible modifications to the writing portfolio assessment process in order to improve the CATS test for optimum results. Major areas of discussion included instructional time spent on portfolios, portfolio connections to P-16 transition and resolving differences in teacher-produced scores and audited scores.

The Board approved a recommendation from its two subcommittees for Department of Education staff to form a committee of stakeholders that will study and bring recommendations to the Board on the feasibility of changes to the writing portfolio in the following areas:

- Percent of weight within the academic index
- Quality of training and audiences reached by training on writing portfolio implementation
- Necessity to revisit the writing performance standards
- Consideration of using a unified scoring process
- Using Kentucky teachers to serve as audit-scorers
- Exploring use of alternative sets of content at various grade levels
- Spreading portfolio entries across grade levels or changing grade levels where portfolio assessment occurs
- Improving the code of ethics
- Decreasing the importance of the writing portfolio score and increasing emphasis on improvement of writing
- Appropriate use of technology in the writing process

The two subcommittees will meet again at the August 11-12 state board meeting and will receive an update on the work of this new stakeholder committee.

For more information on work to improve the writing portfolio, contact Starr Lewis at (502) 564-9850 (email: slewis@kde.state.ky.us).

POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS TO CATS DISCUSSED

Kentucky Board of Education members were apprised that a unique opportunity exists to evaluate Kentucky's current assessment and accountability program and make any necessary improvements to current practices due to the addition of the federal dimension to Kentucky's system, requested changes by educators and other stakeholders, the culmination of the current assessment contract in 2006 and the need for a Request for Proposal (RFP) to be written for assessments provided in spring 2007. Even though Kentucky's system is only one of eight in the nation to receive a grade of "A" in 2003 from Education Week, the Board felt it was time to consider improvements in order to ensure Kentucky remains as one of the top systems.

The Board approved the staff note titled "Shaping Kentucky's Assessment and Accountability Program, School Year 2006-2007 and Beyond" as a concept paper. Department staff was authorized to proceed with investigating the proposed improvements and asked to bring back implementation plans to the Board for those that prove to be reasonable. The possible improvements were characterized as either technical in nature or as producing a set of wrap-around services to support students.

As part of the discussion, the Board clearly indicated that the central goal of the assessment and accountability system continues to be the provision of a valid and reliable public accountability gauge regarding the status of every school to meet the goals set by the legislature as implemented by the Board. Additionally, the Board indicated that the system can be strengthened with a more direct link between assessment, curriculum and instruction.

For more information on the potential improvements to CATS, contact Scott Trimble at (502) 564-2256 (email: sttrimble@kde.state.ky.us).

STATE BOARD REGRETFULLY APPROVES 2004-2005 PRESCHOOL RATES

Each spring, the Kentucky Board of Education establishes the per-child rates for the Kentucky Preschool Program for the next school year. The following per-child rates were approved with regret by the Board at its April meeting due to the per-child rate for at-risk children being \$523 less than in 2001-02, or a 21% decrease:

Per-Child Rates: At-Risk Only	\$1,982
Speech/Language	2,081
Mild/Developmental Delays	2,774
Severe/Multiple Disabilities	3,765

Maximum Available for Mid-Year Growth: \$250,000

*Rates are based on a proposed preschool budget of \$44,800,000 being considered by the legislature.

Department staff emphasized that the situation of decreased per-child rates due to insufficient state funds exists even though research clearly shows the investment of additional dollars in these early years saves significant dollars later and reports indicate Kentucky has one of the top preschool programs in the nation.

For more information on preschool funding, contact Kim Townley at (502) 564-8341 (email: ktownley@kde.state.ky.us).

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED BY THE BOARD AT THE APRIL MEETING WERE:

- Minutes from the February 10-12, 2004, regular meeting and February 11, 2004, special joint meeting with the Council on Postsecondary Education
- Hearing Officer's Report ratifying amendments to 703 KAR 5:070, Inclusion of Special Populations
- Appointment of Judge Lewis Paisley as mediator in the Jackson Independent/Breathitt County non-resident student appeal issue
- 2003-2004 District Tax Rates Levied for Jackson Independent and Spencer County
- District Facility Plans for Carlisle, Greenup, and Metcalfe Counties and Augusta and Russell Independents
- District Facility Plan Amendments for Casey and Clinton Counties
- Site approval for the proposed new consolidated Harlan County High School
- 702 KAR 7:065, Designation of Agent to Manage High School Interscholastic Athletics (Final)
- Re-appointment of L.V. McGinty to the KHSAA Board of Control
- Alternative SBDM model for Caldwell County Primary School
- Alternative SBDM model for Fairdale High School Magnet Center
- 2003 Report, 2003 Exceptions, and 2005 Plan Required by 702 KAR 1:115, Annual in-service training of district board members
- Floyd County Request to Continue State Assistance
- Payment of NASBE dues

OTHER ITEMS REVIEWED BY THE BOARD IN APRIL WITH NO ACTION TAKEN WERE:

- KDE Employment Report
- Report on 2004 elementary and secondary education legislation and biennial budget
- 703 KAR 5:040, Statewide assessment and accountability program, relating accountability to A1 schools and A2-A6 programs
- Reward strategies for schools and districts meeting goals established by state and federal statutes and regulations
- Longitudinal assessment and implications for accountability

- Summary of reports and recommendations of the statewide and regional stakeholders regarding services for students who are blind/visually impaired, deaf/hard of hearing and deaf-blind
- Report on Title IX Deficiencies for schools audited during the 2003-04 school year and recommendations for 2004-2005
- KDE Coordinated School Health efforts
- Update on deficient and watch list districts
- Greater Assistance to Teachers: CATS-linked units of study, teacher exemplars, annotated student work and open-response items bank
- Refocusing secondary education
- Annual report of the Kentucky Education Collaborative for State Agency Children (KECSAC)
- State Scholars Program
- Jessamine Early Learning Village

KBE MEETING DATES FOR 2004

<u>2004</u>	<u>Type of Meeting</u>	<u>Location</u>
May 12-13	KBE retreat and strategic plan discussion	Frankfort
June 2-3	Regular meeting	Frankfort
August 11-12	Regular meeting and commissioner's evaluation	Frankfort
October 6-7	Regular meeting	*TBD
December 8-9	Regular meeting	Frankfort

*TBD – To be determined

For more information on the schedule contact Mary Ann Miller at 502-564-3141 (email mmiller@kde.state.ky.us) or Susan Palmer at 502-564-3141 (email spalmer@kde.state.ky.us).

The actions described above were taken in open session of the Kentucky Board of Education at the April 7-8, 2004, regular meeting conducted in the State Board Room, Capital Plaza Tower, 1st Floor, Frankfort, Kentucky. This information is provided in summary form, and an official record of the meeting is available on tape in the permanent records of the Kentucky Board of Education, First Floor, Capital Plaza Tower, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601. These records are open for inspection Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

For additional information about the Kentucky Board of Education meetings, agendas, minutes or special accommodations needed for attending meetings, contact Mary Ann Miller, Policy Coordinator at (502) 564-3141.

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